

I suspect change would come much easier if I was leading robots. Replace some hardware, upgrade the software, and presto! Change complete. But then again, for change to be that easy I would have to be a robot, too.

Leading others through change starts with leading myself through the change.

As I've stated previously¹, most major organizational changes have advocates – those gung-ho individuals who wish we had made this change yesterday. It also has resisters – the “not in my lifetime” crowd who are quite happy the way things are. Getting them both (and everyone in between) through the change at roughly the same time is a challenge.



But the hard part is that we are somewhere on that spectrum ourselves. Whether we want the change, are relatively neutral, or are fighting the change, we have to lead through it and bring us all safely to the other side.

Here are some principles to help you effectively lead yourself through change:

1. **If you're resisting the change, recognize that *it's not about you*.** Somebody obviously believes this change is good for the organization. Seek to understand why. Unless you're in a position to tactfully influence it, accept that the change is going to happen and determine to do all you can to make it successful. Creating resistance burns resources and wasted resources don't contribute to success. If your organization's success doesn't matter to you, do your organization a favor and leave.

Does the new process make extra work for you? Be willing to take a hit for the net benefit of all. In a healthy organizational culture, others will do the same for you when it contributes to overall success.

2. **If you're neutral to the change, recognize that *it's not about you*.** Not being in either camp gives you an opportunity to empathize with the resisters while helping them get on board. You may also be able to help the advocates understand what's holding the resisters back. Your goal is organizational success, which means you should care about successfully navigating the change. Shrugging your shoulders and doing nothing doesn't contribute to success.
3. **If you're an advocate for the change, recognize that *it's not about you*.** To expedite the process, you should work hard to understand the concerns of the resisters. *Understand* and *persuade* are not the same thing. But know that *listening* is the most influential communication skill. This isn't about you getting your way, it's about creating shared success.

In case you missed it, the point is that *it's not about you*. If you want to be a part of something bigger than yourself, you need to be willing to make some personal sacrifices for the shared success of the whole organization. Likewise, your team may need to make sacrifices so other teams can better contribute to your shared success. Personal success comes easier in a successful organization, so put the organization's success ahead of your own and come out a winner.

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¹ <http://www.enlumenls.com/here-change-comes/>